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Letter dated 8 February 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, and with reference to my letter dated 24 December 2015, issued as Security Council document S/2015/1029, I have the honour to enclose herewith a note concerning the allegations contained in the letter dated 29 January 2016 and issued under the symbol S/2016/94.

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Y. Halit **Çevik**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 8 February 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The note entitled "Illegal trading in hydrocarbons by ISIL", annexed to the letter of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation, dated 29 January 2016 and distributed under the symbol S/2016/94, constitutes another example of the smear campaign against Turkey.

It is a well-known fact that the largest amount of oil and oil products extracted from areas controlled by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known as Daesh, is either traded with the Syrian regime or consumed in Syria.

The Syrian regime continues to use electricity and natural gas that are provided by production and transmission facilities under the control of the Daesh/ISIL terrorist group. Further, there is sufficient information which reveals the involvement of persons and companies linked with the Syrian regime and the Russian Federation, financing Daesh/ISIL in exchange for an uninterrupted supply of natural gas from the Jubaissah field and oil from Homs T4 fields. As such, a Syrian businessman, George Haswani, who is known to have ties with the Russian company Stroytransgaz, has been proscribed by the European Union and the United States of America for financing the terrorist activities of Daesh/ISIL.

Those allegations are an attempt to overshadow the fact that the Russian Federation's military operations in Syria target civilians and Syrian people who are fighting Daesh/ISIL, while most of the oil refineries and oil tankers of Daesh/ISIL have been destroyed by the air strikes of the Anti-Daesh Coalition, of which Turkey is an active member. The Russian Federation's claims of hitting Daesh/ISIL oil production facilities have proved to be unfounded, as the targets they claimed as such turned out to be a water distillery (36° 10' 41.1" N, 38° 02' 30.1" E) and wheat storage (35° 47' 55.3" N, 38° 13' 06.6" E) facilities.

Similarly, allegations by the Russian Federation concerning the situation between Turkey's Syrian border at Cilvegözü/Bab al-Hawa and Azaz in Syria are completely misleading and an obvious attempt at disinformation.

It is important to note that only two border gates, Cilvegözü/Bab-al Hawa and Öncüpınar/Bab al-Salam, are operational at the Turkey-Syria border. No vehicle through traffic is allowed on these border crossings. Humanitarian aid is unloaded at the zero-point of the border, goes through a customs check and is picked up by Syrian trucks at the zero-point of the border.

In this regard, between 24 July 2014 and 31 December 2015, 3,979 truckloads of humanitarian assistance from Cilvegözü/Bab al-Hawa and 413 truckloads of humanitarian assistance from Öncüpınar/Bab al-Salam, passed through the trans-shipment zone at the zero-point of the border and were sent into Syria by the United Nations, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015).

Allegations of Turkey's involvement in oil trade with Daesh/ISIL, including through Iraq, are baseless and are mere products of this smear campaign as well.

Turkish companies, subject to false allegations in the said letter, are fully transparent in their business operations. Tüpraş is Turkey's largest industrial

enterprise and controls all of Turkey's refining capacity. Powertrans, which is also mentioned in the letter, is the only Turkish company licensed to transport and trade oil and oil products from and to Iraq by truck. Both the company and the relevant Turkish authorities strictly control the whole process.

There are no middlemen in the oil trade between Turkey and Iraq. The company buys oil directly from the licensed Iraqi authorities at the extraction sites. The oil brought from extraction sites in Iraq is loaded onto the trucks and delivered to discharge terminals in Ceyhan, namely Dörtyol Delta and Toros. Claims that Daesh/ISIL oil is reaching Turkey through Iraq by tanker are completely unfounded. Tanker trucks are followed 24/7 with a vehicle tracking system. That is to say, trucks are allowed to stop only at specific points between the Habur border gate and the discharge terminal. Trucks have to arrive at the discharge terminal in a maximum of 72 hours. Otherwise, the vehicle tracking system sends an alert to the call centre, and the mobile patrol teams, which work 24/7, approach the truck to check if there is any problem. Neither the oil refineries in Batman nor the oil companies listed in the letter have any link to the transport of Daesh/ISIL oil.

Oil produced from a given oil field has a special structure and quality. In other words, every oil field has a kind of DNA. The quality of the oil would change if any other kind of oil were mixed into it. The quality of the product bought by the company is inspected by an independent international private inspection company, upon receipt from Iraq, at the border gates and before loading onto the ships. The quality of oil is stated on the certificate of origin, which is prepared for every consignment. Therefore, it is not possible to mix the oil received from Iraq with the so-called Daesh/ISIL smuggled oil.

Information and figures regarding bilateral trade between Turkey and Iraq can be found in the enclosure.

The claims concerning the İskenderun port area, as well, are outrageous. The legal trade activities, including in oil of the Republic of Turkey, cannot be subjected to such baseless allegations.

Furthermore, in a letter dated 10 December 2015, the Deputy Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the United Nations requested that Turkey allow exports of oil products from Turkey to Syria for the use of the humanitarian relief agencies of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations registered and allowed to function in Turkey. In fact, Turkey authorized such exports of oil products to United Nations humanitarian relief agencies in June 2015 for a period of six months free of tax.

The alleged routes claimed to be used for Daesh/ISIL oil transport into Turkey pass through areas controlled by different groups, including Daesh/ISIL, the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and the Syrian regime, which implies that they are cooperating with each other, thus revealing the nature of these allegations.

Enclosure

Information and figures regarding bilateral trade between Turkey and Iraq

The figures regarding bilateral trade between Turkey and Iraq since 2011 are provided below.

Bilateral trade between Turkey and Iraq

(Billions of United States dollars)

	2011	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015[a]*
Turkey's exports	8.31	10.82	11.95	10.90	8.07
Turkey's imports	0.87	0.15	0.15	0.27	0.27
Trade volume	9.18	10.97	12.10	11.17	8.34

Source: Turkish Statistical Institute (oil and oil products are not included in the import data).
[a] From January to November.

- Turkey's truck fleet has around 45,000 vehicles.
- The numbers with regard to trucks and tankers that used the Habur border crossing point between Turkey and Iraq in 2015 are provided below. Habur is currently the only functioning border gate between the two countries.

Habur border gate

	Entry			*Exit*			
2015	*Tanker*	*Trucks*	*Total*	*Tanker*	*Trucks*	*Total*	*Average per day*
January	423	61 293	61 716	64	58 492	58 556	4 006
February	262	47 755	48 017	21	47 090	47 111	3 170
March	250	50 055	50 305	89	55 510	55 599	3 530
April	102	54 587	54 689	198	55 338	55 536	3 674
May	11	52 591	52 602	262	56 800	57 062	3 655
June	6	53 600	53 606	283	52 429	52 712	3 525
July	55	48 050	48 105	118	42 303	42 421	3 017
August	16	49 156	49 172	194	53 887	54 081	3 441
September	27	45 141	45 168	44	37 224	37 268	2 747
October	36	55 609	55 645	117	60 400	60 517	3 868
November	74	51 243	51 317	56	54 057	54 113	3 514
December	6	16 915	16 921	15	16 806	16 821	1124
Total	**1 268**	**54 132 395**	**587 263**	**1 461**	**590 336**	**591 797**	**3 273**

The average number of trucks and tankers that used the Habur border gate daily was 3,273 in 2015.